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116

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

714.00(W)/5-1553

AMEMBASSY, GUATEMALA

1007
DESP. NO.

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

May 15, 1953
DATE

F790001-1258

5-19-53

Date of Action MAY 16 1953

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	REC'D MAY 18	OTHER	
		ARMY NAVY AIR OSD CIA	Name of Officer Wilcott

SUBJECT: JOINT WEEKA NO. 20 FOR STATE, ARMY, AIR FROM SAA

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In a week without significant developments, the Guatemalan press commented on the International Labor Day speeches of President ARBENZ and Víctor Manuel GUTIERREZ, Communist Secretary General of the General Confederation of Labor (CGTG); Senator Wiley's reported proposal that an investigation be made of Communism in the Caribbean area, and an article by William L. Ryan of the AP quoting Pravda as saying that all Communists south of the Río Grande should follow the example of Guatemala. The treatment of these themes by the independent press indicated an awareness of the undemocratic and interventionist character of Soviet Communism.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

The numerous articles published in the official and pro-Government newspapers after the May Day celebrations (Weeka No. 19) concentrated primary attention on the speech of President Arbenz and devoted columns of print to repeating, re-emphasizing and occasionally exaggerating what he had said on that occasion. José Alfredo PALMIERI, an anti-Communist writer for the independent La Hora, expressed a somewhat different view. He said he considered that the participation of President Arbenz and other high officials in the May Day celebration was more a sign of their complicity in "the big swindle of our Guatemala" than of ingenuousness as had been thought before. He asserted that the presence of Colonel Arbenz and his Ministers gave the Communists "the great satisfaction they need to continue the exploitation of the false position they enjoy and their empty claim to power over the unions".

It was not until several days after May 1 that the pro-Government, pro-Communist Nuestro Diario published the text

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of Sr. GUTIERREZ' address, and comment from the Government side was scant. But, in an editorial entitled, "Democracy is not Tolerance", Nuestro Diario of May 11 endorsed Sr. Gutiérrez' opposition to allowing democracy and freedom to the "enemies of the people". This editorial called for severe punishment for the plotters of the Salamá uprising (Weeka No. 14) and said that little progress would have been made if the "reactionary political organization in which these subversive plans and international contacts are hatched are left intact".

In contrast, the independent Prensa Libre compared Sr. Gutiérrez' concept of liberty with that of former President Ubico, asserting that the former President did not prohibit or place hinderances in the way of anyone's decision to become one of his supporters and stating that Sr. Gutiérrez wished to leave everyone the liberty of being a Communist or of delivering himself blindly, servilely and irresponsibly to the policy of the rulers with all its load of faults and errors.

The extreme sensitivity in Guatemala on the subject of intervention in domestic affairs was again underscored when the anti-Communist Prensa Libre attacked a reported proposal of Senator Alexander Wiley that there should be a complete investigation of the Communist advances in Central and South America. In its lead editorial on May 10 Prensa Libre asked, "How would Senator Wiley like it if a committee of (the Guatemalan) Congress were to decide to open an investigation of the activities of the Ku Klux Klan in the South of the United States...? There is a difference between the one and the other, but it is a difference of degree. We agree that the activities of the Guatemalan Communist Party may become a threat to continental solidarity in certain circumstances, but as long as those specific conditions are not present it remains a domestic problem and the danger affects Guatemalan democracy and Guatemalan interests alone. . . . On the internal plane, Communism is a political problem which must be dealt with and solved by Guatemalans, without meddling investigations by any foreign Senate committee."

In commenting on an article by William L. Ryan, Associated Press Foreign News Analyst, published on May 10 in Novedades (Mexico City), reporting that the Moscow Pravda had recently cited the Communist movement in Guatemala as a model for Communists in Latin America, the independent La Hora of May 12 said that the Pravda article constituted "proof of

Desp. No. 1007
From: Guatemala

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Desp. No.
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the ties which the local Communists, organized politically, maintain with Moscow, and the interventionist character of their activities in our country". Similarly, the independent El Imparcial of May 12 underscored the link this showed between Moscow and the Guatemalan Communists and commented on the parallels of Marxist jargon used by Pravda and the leftist propaganda organs here. "Guatemala's independent press", El Imparcial said, "has for years been pointing out the danger of regarding as unimportant the advances of Communism in our country. Now we have a Trojan horse in our house; many have fallen under the spell of the siren song of the common enemy and those who should be able to see clearly and avert the danger in time do not want to do so for the simple whim of not gratifying those whom they consider adversaries of the revolution..."

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